

their paychecks today that they would otherwise get. So I think those problems need to be addressed.

But on the other issue, I at least believe that we made some good progress yesterday, and I'm looking forward to the report today and continuing this process until we succeed, until we get this job done.

Q. Can we ask the leaders, Mr. President, if they will get the checks out and—

Q. Do you think the Congress should go home when millions are denied subsistence checks over Christmas?

*Speaker Gingrich.* Well, let me just say, if I could for a second, Mr. President, I think both the House and Senate hope to get those bills down here today so that the—the AFDC and the—as the President mentioned the other day on television.

Q. What are the chances of reopening the Government, Mr. Speaker?

*Speaker Gingrich.* I think we're going to talk about that now.

Q. Mr. Speaker, do you feel like a dog being wagged by its tail? [*Laughter*]

*Speaker Gingrich.* It's amazing you guys get paid for some of these questions, on the eve of Christmas. Merry Christmas.

Q. No, it's not my expression; it's the President's analysis.

*The President.* I never called the Speaker a dog. [*Laughter*]

Q. No, I know you didn't.

*Speaker Gingrich.* And I'm deeply grateful. [*Laughter*]

Q. Mr. President, do you think you can get a framework of a deal by Christmas?

*The President.* I'm prepared to—let me just say, I'm prepared to just keep working. I think all of us want to have Christmas with our families, but beyond that, I'm prepared to keep working. And I'm going to do everything I can to succeed, and that's what we're going to talk about.

Q. Mr. Speaker—

*The President.* Thank you. We really need to go to work.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:52 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House, prior to a meeting with congressional leaders. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

## Statement With Congressional Leaders on Budget Negotiations

*December 22, 1995*

Today we had good meetings which built on the progress made in yesterday's discussions. Staff will prepare further analysis to clarify options for the budget advisory group, which will then advise the principals on outstanding issues. Following the meeting of the budget advisory

group, the principals will meet again next Friday afternoon.

NOTE: This statement was announced jointly with Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Bob Dole, Senate majority leader.

## Statement on Signing Limited Continuing Appropriations Legislation

*December 22, 1995*

Today I have signed into law House Joint Resolution 136, which ensures that the Government makes veterans' benefit payments to 3.3

million veterans and their survivors without further delay.

The resolution also provides funding for several vitally important programs for children and